**Sharing Our Testimony**

Acts 21:37 – 22:29 from November 7, 2021

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*Before going further in this transcript, consider this: Last week we ended the sermon, “to be continued….” Jerusalem was in an uproar, and the rioters were trying to kill Paul. As many as 200 Roman soldiers showed up on the scene, and God used them to providentially save Paul’s life. They arrest Paul, bind him with 2 chains, and then take him into the barracks… or at least, they try to. The story continues in Acts 21:37 and following…. Please read Acts 21:37 through 22:29 before reading further in this transcript.*

Last week, Acts 21:35-36 told us that “When Paul reached the steps, the violence of the mob was SO great he had to be CARRIED by the soldiers. The crowd that followed kept shouting, “Get rid of him!” In other words, the crowd was SO worked up, and out of control, that Paul, a fully grown man, had to be lifted up off of the ground and carried by the soldiers! We’re not given precise details here, but I kind of picture the Roman soldiers carrying Paul up above their heads! (*Kind of like crowd surfing at a rock concert!*) Well, be that as it may, Paul finds himself in a highly charged and incredibly volatile situation, which is what makes his next decision SO shocking. At this point, I think most of us would agree that Paul was lucky to get out of there ALIVE! Good for him, he’ll live to tell people about Jesus *another day*. But no… not Paul. For some reason, Paul decided that this particular moment, was an opportune time for him to share his personal testimony! In Acts 21:39 Paul says, “…Please let me speak to the people.’” You’ve got to be kidding Paul: right NOW, right HERE on the steps, right IN THE FACE of this angry crowd? But Paul was NOT kidding, he was dead serious. Perhaps even more surprising is the fact that the Roman commander actually gives Paul permission to speak![[1]](#footnote-1) [[2]](#footnote-2) [[3]](#footnote-3) After all, these Roman soldiers had come to put an end to this riot, not to become Paul’s personal security force. Even so, Acts 21:40 and following says, “After receiving the commander’s permission, Paul stood on the steps and motioned to the crowd. When they were all silent, he said to them in Aramaic: “Brothers and fathers, listen now to my defense.”[[4]](#footnote-4)

So Paul makes the most of this opportunity[[5]](#footnote-5), in a very unique setting, to give his gospel defense. This will actually be one of several defenses that he will give in these final chapters of Acts. We can break today’s passage into 4 sections. In section #1…

**1) Paul begins his gospel defense by helping his listeners relate to his story.** (vv. 1-5) Paul begins his defense in Acts 22:1-2, “Brothers and fathers, listen now to my defense.” When they heard him speak to them in Aramaic, they became very quiet.” Let’s imagine together what this scenario might have looked like: Paul is probably a little battered, bruised, and dirty from his recent beating and being dragged around. His clothes and hair were probably a mess! He’s standing at the top of the stairs leading up to the barracks[[6]](#footnote-6), while the Jews were gathered at the foot of the steps down below. The commander and his troops surround Paul with a protective circle. Paul takes control of the situation, “Brothers and fathers….”[[7]](#footnote-7) The reason that Paul addresses them as “Brothers and fathers” is that these are his kinsmen.[[8]](#footnote-8) This is Paul’s way of relating to them by respectfully appealing to their common Jewish lineage.[[9]](#footnote-9) Paul refers to this as his defense. Ultimately, what he’s defending is the gospel. The gospel that he was living for, and the gospel, for which he was ready to die. What we’ll discover in today’s passage is that his gospel defense includes sharing his own personal salvation story, as well as his call to Gentile ministry. This is all part of his gospel defense. Two times we’re told that Paul spoke to them in Aramaic. Some Bible translations say he spoke in Hebrew. One Study Bible explains this seeming discrepancy this way: “The New Testament writers use the same Greek word to refer to [both] the Hebrew and Aramaic languages….”[[10]](#footnote-10) So, whether it was actually Aramaic or Hebrew, the point is that it was the language used by the Jewish people[[11]](#footnote-11); a language that was familiar to these Palestinian Jews and it got their FULL attention.[[12]](#footnote-12) Speaking to them in Aramaic rather than in Greek, was far more acceptable to this agitated crowd. Paul was being accused of being a traitor to his own heritage; so speaking in their shared mother tongue, bought him at least a small measure of goodwill.[[13]](#footnote-13) The fact is, Paul was working hard to craft his message in such a way, that his listeners could relate to his story: He began by addressing them respectfully as “brothers and fathers.” He then speaks to them in their heart language.

He then goes on to share some things that they have in common. In verse 3, he makes it clear that they are his fellow Jews. He informs them that he was brought up in Jerusalem, the best city in the world! He tells them that he was thoroughly trained in the Jewish law by Gamaliel[[14]](#footnote-14) himself! Gamaliel was arguably “the most honored [Jewish] rabbi of the first century.”[[15]](#footnote-15) So all of the Jews listening to Paul’s defense would now understand that Paul’s Jewish tutelage was under the absolute best teacher in the land. In verse 4, Paul recounts his zeal for God. How he zealously persecuted Christians to their DEATH, throwing both men/women in jail. He says, “just ask the high priest” if you don’t believe me, or the Council, which is a reference to the Jewish Sanhedrin.[[16]](#footnote-16) Paul makes it clear, that HE ALSO used to think, that being a faithful Jew meant zealously opposing Christianity, just like the crowd that was now opposing him.[[17]](#footnote-17) [[18]](#footnote-18) [[19]](#footnote-19)

After helping his listeners relate to his story…

**2) Paul then shares his personal salvation story.** (vv. 6-16)

Some of us might refer to this as our Christian Testimony. A testimony is simply our own eye-witness account of the evidence as we’ve encountered it. It’s our PERSONAL salvation story. So before Paul defends his call to Gentile ministry, he first lays out a defense for calling on the name of Jesus. He specifically shares about his own personal encounter with Jesus, and how that is really what has made all the difference in his life.[[20]](#footnote-20) Paul’s personal encounter with Jesus is actually laid out three separate times in the book of Acts:

Acts 9 records Paul’s story, from Luke’s perspective to his readers. Which is why a lot of today’s text may sound familiar to us.

Acts 22 records Paul’s story, from Paul’s perspective to his Jewish listeners in Jerusalem.

Acts 26 records Paul’s story, from Paul’s perspective to his Gentile listeners (specifically Governor Festus and King Agrippa).[[21]](#footnote-21)

Our focus today is Acts 22, where Paul focuses on his Jewish listeners. In Acts 22:6-7 Paul says, “About noon as I came near Damascus, suddenly a bright light from heaven flashed around me. I fell to the ground and heard a voice say to me, ‘Saul! Saul! Why do you persecute me?’” Paul was also known as Saul, and His story begins with a BANG, well, no… actually it begins with a FLASH! Paul not only claims to have SEEN this bright light from heaven, but also to have HEARD God’s voice from heaven.[[22]](#footnote-22) Even more compelling, is how this voice identifies himself, “I am Jesus of Nazareth.” Paul then says that his companions had to lead him by the hand, because the light… had made him blind! In Acts 22:12-13 Paul tells them, “A man named Ananias came to see me. He was a devout observer of the law and highly respected by all the Jews living there. He stood beside me and said, ‘Brother Saul, receive your sight!’ And at that very moment I was able to see him.” Paul highlights that Ananias was a “devout observer of the law,” because this was a compelling detail for this particular audience. Ananias not only healed Paul’s blindness, but he also then delivered a message from God. We can imagine that at this point, Paul’s Jewish listeners were on the edge of their seats: what could this message possibly be!? God did something supernatural, something miraculous in Paul’s life, so what’s going on here?

Ananias’ message to Paul was astounding: In Acts 22:14-15 Ananias tells Paul, “…The God of our ancestors has chosen you to know his will and to see the Righteous One and to hear words from his mouth. You will be his witness to all people of what you have seen and heard.” Paul claims that God not only chose him to know His will, but also to see and hear the Righteous One. For his Jewish audience, the mention of “the Righteous One” would have REALLY gotten their attention. “The Righteous One” would have gotten them thinking about their coming Messiah. Only Paul was saying that Messiah had already come. In fact, Paul was saying that he had both seen/heard the Messiah. (This is an incredible claim for any Jew to make!) This was a key part of Paul’s testimony: “To see the resurrected Jesus was all-important to Paul…. It was that experience that had convinced him of the truth of the gospel and that became the foundation of his theology.”[[23]](#footnote-23) [[24]](#footnote-24) Paul had already mentioned Jesus earlier, but now, in verse 14, Paul testifies to his Jewish listeners, that Jesus, was none other than the Righteous One for whom they’d been waiting.[[25]](#footnote-25) [[26]](#footnote-26) [[27]](#footnote-27)

Paul also claims that God called him to be his witness. So Ananias basically says, “hey, before you go running off and being a witness for Christ, it would probably be a good if you became a Christian first! In Acts 22:16 Ananias tells Paul, “And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on his name.”[[28]](#footnote-28) To be clear, the water from this baptism is not what washed Paul’s sins away. Calling on the name of Jesus is what washed his sins away! Baptism is the outward symbol of the inward change.[[29]](#footnote-29) [[30]](#footnote-30) This is why our church encourages every believer in Christ to be baptized, to make a public demonstration of your trust in Jesus. In fact, we have a baptism class coming up on each of the next two Sundays, November 14 and 21. Contact Pastor Eric at [Pastor.Nygren@gmail.com](mailto:Pastor.Nygren@gmail.com) for more info. You only need to go to one of these two Sundays. They’re during the Connection Time between services. Calling on Jesus’ name, points not only to the day of Paul’s baptism though, it also points to the day of his salvation.[[31]](#footnote-31) This kind of prayer, placing our trust in Jesus, is precisely what saves us from sin and begins our new spiritual life. As you’re reading this sermon transcript, if you’ve not yet called on Jesus’ name, any of us pastors would absolutely love to talk with you about that. Please don’t hesitate to get ahold of one of us.

Paul still has more to say in verses 17-21…

**3) Paul also explains his call to Gentile ministry.** (vv. 17-21) One of the key aspects of Paul’s “defense,” is explaining his rationale for his ministry among the Gentiles.[[32]](#footnote-32) At this time in history, there was significant tension between Jews and Gentiles.[[33]](#footnote-33) Paul’s calling to be God’s witness to the Gentiles came directly from God Himself. We saw this back in verses 14-15, and we see it again here in Acts 21:21, “Then the Lord said to me, ‘Go; I will send you far away to the Gentiles.’” Paul’s ministry to the Gentiles is nothing less than the fulfillment of God’s Master Redemptive Plan for humanity. “For God so loved THE WORLD.”[[34]](#footnote-34) Way back in Genesis 22:18 God told Abraham “through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed.” Abraham was one of the most honored Jews who ever lived (1,500 years ago). The same Jews who were attacking Paul would have been familiar with this message to Abraham. But they had either grown calloused and forgotten about God’s Master Redemptive Plan for all peoples, or they were simply choosing to ignore it. An author named Darrell Bock says it well: Paul’s apologetic defense “is more about the promise of God than about defending [himself] before Rome.”[[35]](#footnote-35) In other words, if these Jews[[36]](#footnote-36) have a problem with the Gentiles being included in God’s Master Redemptive Plan, Paul is not the one to blame, God is![[37]](#footnote-37) [[38]](#footnote-38) [[39]](#footnote-39) Bock later mentions that Paul’s Christian Faith “is the natural outcome of genuine Jewish tradition, NOT the distortion of it….”[[40]](#footnote-40) In other words, Paul clarifies that this “new” Christian Faith (~25 years old) has some very OLD Jewish roots (~1,500 years).[[41]](#footnote-41)

That’s as far as Paul gets with his defense of the gospel because…

**4) Paul’s Gentile ministry gets a severe response.** (vv. 22-29) Acts 22:22 says, “The crowd listened to Paul UNTIL he said this. Then they raised their voices and shouted, “Rid the earth of him! He’s not fit to live!”[[42]](#footnote-42) So here’s the question: Why did Paul’s statement about the Gentiles in verse 21, get such a SEVERE response from these Jews in verse 22? After all, they could have gotten angry back in verse 7, when Paul mentioned Jesus. Or, they could have gotten mad back in verse 14, when Paul claimed to know God’s will, and to have seen and heard the Righteous One – openly proclaiming that Jesus was the Messiah! But they listened patiently right up UNTIL… verse 22. Why is that? One author notes that this response in verse 22, “parallels what had happened to Jesus in the synagogue at Nazareth, where the people of his hometown turned on him for speaking of God’s concern for the Gentiles.[[43]](#footnote-43) [You see] Though God intended [for] Israel to be a light to the nations, they turned inward and became exclusivist, believing that God loved them and no one else.”[[44]](#footnote-44) “They turned inward and became exclusivist, believing that God loved them and no one else.” Brother or Sister in Christ, may this NEVER be said of E-Free Bemidji, that we “turned inward and became exclusivist, believing that God loves us and no one else.” The Gospel is Good News for ALL people, not just for us, not just for our families, and not just for our own people group. The gospel is for ALL people. Well, there’s more that could be said about today’s text, but we’re out of time for today….

I’d like to wrap up by asking you to please take a look at the bulletin insert that is pasted on the last page of this manuscript. It’s called “Helpful Hints for Sharing Our Testimony.”[[45]](#footnote-45) I put this together, hoping that it’ll be a helpful guide for you. The goal is to get us thinking, about how we might all share our OWN salvation story, our PERSONAL Christian Testimony. Let me ask you this: When is the last time that you shared your testimony with someone? When’s the last time you told someone else about your own personal encounter with Jesus, when you chose to call on His name? Dear Brother or Sister in Christ, this week, let’s make sure that we don’t keep the Good News about Jesus all to ourselves; let’s try to intentionally share it, with someone who may not have yet heard the gospel. I challenge you to pray for an opportunity this week, to tell at least one other person your personal salvation story. Now, Paul chose the unlikely setting of an angry crowd. Maybe that’s the setting that you will chose. Or, maybe you’ll share over a cup of coffee or tea with a friend or a relative or a colleague from work? Maybe you’ll share with someone you go to school with or with your neighbor while you’re both out in the back yard raking leaves. Or maybe you’ll share with someone at Deer Camp!

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1. Commander = “Greek chiliarch (a commander of 1,000) [a regiment], Claudius Lysias by name (22:36), who was stationed at the Fortress of Antonia.” *NIV Study Bible*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI, 2011, p. 1870 footnote on Acts 21:31. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Especially because verse 38 makes it clear that he thought Paul was some kind of an infamous terrorist from Egypt. The Greek word translated “terrorists” specifically means “dagger-men.” “Josephus refers to them as one of the various groups opposed to the Romans. They would use hidden knives to assassinate Romans and their Jewish sympathizers” (*The NIV Zondervan Study Bible*, Grand Rapids, MI, 2015, p. 2267 footnote on Acts 21:38). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. “It may well be that the tribune, thinking that others have made the same misidentification as he has, allows Paul the chance to set his identity straight, in hopes that this might calm things.” Darrell L. Bock, *Acts*, Baker, Grand Rapids, MI 2007, p. 655. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Paul begins with the same words that Stephen used back in Acts 7:2. F.F. Bruce, *The Book of Acts: Rev. Ed.*, NICNT, Eerdman’s, Grand Rapids, MI, 1988, p. 414. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. See Ephesians 5:16. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Barracks = “The Fortress of Atonia was connected to the northern end of the temple area by two flights of steps. The tower overlooked the temple area.” *NIV Study Bible*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI, 2011, p. 1870 footnote on Acts 21:37. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. See F.F. Bruce, *The Book of Acts: Rev. Ed.*, NICNT, Eerdman’s, Grand Rapids, MI, 1988, pp. 412-413. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Not to mention that there probably weren’t too many women and children around by this point. The intensity of the uproar had probably caused any women and children to scatter and return to their homes. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. *NIV Study Bible*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI, 2011, p. 1847 footnote on Acts 11:1. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. …While the people of Israel used Hebrew in Jewish synagogues, they commonly spoke Aramaic… The crowd grows silent…when they hear Paul speaking in their mother tongue (instead of Greek, the main trade language).”*The NIV Zondervan Study Bible*, Grand Rapids, MI, 2015, p. 2267 footnote on Acts 21:40. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. One translation says, “in the language used by the Hebrews.” Darrell L. Bock, *Acts*, Baker, Grand Rapids, MI, 2007, p. 656. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. *NIV Study Bible*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI, 2011, p. 1870 footnotes on Acts 22:2 and Acts 21:40 as well as *NIV* text note. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. See F.F. Bruce, *The Book of Acts: Rev. Ed.*, NICNT, Eerdman’s, Grand Rapids, MI, 1988, p. 413. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. “guh MAY lih uhl” Severance, W. M., & Eddinger, T. (1997). In That’s easy for you to say: your quick guide to pronouncing Bible names (p. 69). Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. *NIV Study Bible*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI, 2011, p. 1871 footnote on Acts 22:3. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. In fact, that’s exactly what the Roman Commander does at the end of Acts 22 – he takes Paul before the Sanhedrin. We’ll talk about this next week. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Darrell L. Bock, *Acts*, Baker, Grand Rapids, MI, 2007, pp. 659 and 653. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Consider Romans 10:2. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Let’s keep in mind here, that Paul is recounting his history of imprisoning others, while he himself is standing there in chains! [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. “The fact that the account of Paul’s conversion occurs three times in Acts (9:1-22; here; 26:9-18) confirms its importance for Luke. See…Genesis 24:34-49 for this common feature in ancient story telling.” *NIV Study Bible*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI, 2011, p. 1871 footnote on Acts 22:6-21. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. *The NIV Zondervan Study Bible*, Grand Rapids, MI, 2015, p. 2267 footnote on Acts 22:6-21. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. One Study Bible notes that… “In rabbinic tradition such a voice from heaven would have been understood as the voice of God himself. The solemn repetition of Saul’s name…and the bright light…suggested to him that he was in the presence of deity.” *NIV Study Bible*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI, 2011, p. 1841 footnote on Acts 9:5. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. See Acts 26:16; 1 Corinthians 9:1; 15:8. *NIV Study Bible*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI, 2011, p. 1871 footnote on Acts 22:14. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Not to mention “Paul’s commission as an apostle.” *The NIV Zondervan Study Bible*, Grand Rapids, MI, 2015, p. 2267 footnote on Acts 22:14. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. The Apostle Peter, himself a Jew, also referred to Jesus as the Righteous One back in Acts 7:52. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. “The Righteous One” clarifies Jesus’ exalted position. Darrell L. Bock, *Acts*, Baker, Grand Rapids, MI, 2007, p. 661. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. 1 John 2:1 says “My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have an advocate with the Father—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.” [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. “The water itself does not spiritually cleanse people of their sins; it outwardly symbolizes the Holy Spirit’s inward cleansing.” *The NIV Zondervan Study Bible*, Grand Rapids, MI, 2015, p. 2267 footnote on Acts 22:16. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. “Baptism is the outward sign of inward work of grace. The reality and the symbol are closely associated in the New Testament… The outward rite, however, does not produce inward grace.” *NIV Study Bible*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI, 2011, p. 1871 footnote on Acts 22:16. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Some people have said that baptism is like a wedding ring. It’s an outward symbol of an inner commitment. Someone else could put my wedding ring on their finger, but that wouldn’t make them married to my wife, Debbie. However, the outward symbol of me wearing my wedding ring, is an outward, public testimony to everyone, that I’ve made a commitment to be in an exclusive relationship with Debbie. In a similar way, baptism itself can’t make us saved, but it does outwardly symbolize that we have put our trust in Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Darrell L. Bock, *Acts*, Baker, Grand Rapids, MI, 2007, p. 662. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Paul was a well-known Jew who was very active all throughout the Gentile world. That’s the primary reason why Paul’s presence IN JERUSALEM was causing such a stir. You see, Paul’s ministry had been mostly focused on bringing Gentiles to faith in Jesus; but the Jerusalem church was focused on bringing Jews to faith in Jesus. Paul is well known as a representative for gospel outreach to the Gentiles, which is why his presence in Jerusalem raises the stress level for the church there, made up of mostly Jewish Christ-followers. Read Galatians 1:19 and 2:7-10. There was an understanding that Paul and Barnabas would focus on the Gentiles, while James, Peter, and John would focus on the Jews. It’s also interesting to consider John 7:5 from earlier in James’ life. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. “The church in Jerusalem was caught in the middle, wanting to preach to the Jews but supporting the outreach to Gentiles.” Darrell L. Bock, *Acts*, Baker, Grand Rapids, MI, 2007, p. 643. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. John 3:16. Consider Luke 24:47, “…repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached…to ALL nations, beginning in Jerusalem.” [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Darrell L. Bock, *Acts*, Baker, Grand Rapids, MI 2007, p. 654. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Jews, some of whom were from the province of Asia by the way, see Acts 21:27. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Darrell L. Bock, *Acts*, Baker, Grand Rapids, MI, 2007, p. 663. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. The irony here, of course, is that all of this is happening right in front of a bunch of Gentiles, the 200 some Roman soldiers. Darrell L. Bock, *Acts*, Baker, Grand Rapids, MI, 2007, p. 663. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Albeit they may not have understood Aramaic unless there was an interpreter nearby. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Darrell L. Bock, *Acts*, Baker, Grand Rapids, MI, 2007, p. 665. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. See Darrell L. Bock, *Acts*, Baker, Grand Rapids, MI 2007, bottom of p. 655. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. One translation says it this way: “Away with such a fellow from the earth! For he ought not to live!” Darrell L. Bock, *Acts*, Baker, Grand Rapids, MI, 2007, p. 657. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. [Luke wrote about this back in chapter 4 of his Gospel, in 4:14-30.] [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. *The NIV Zondervan Study Bible*, Grand Rapids, MI, 2015, p. 2268 footnote on Acts 22:22. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. You see, as Luke writes down the book of Acts for us, he records Paul’s testimony at least 3 separate times. And some of us might be feeling like, okay Luke, we got it the first time, how many more times do we need to listen to this same story about Paul’s encounter with Jesus on the Road to Damascus!? Luke’s answer would probably be: well, at least 3 times. But even more than that, I think Luke would challenge us to share our Christian testimony as many times as we possibly can, with as many different people as we have opportunity. It’s not like there’s some set limit on how many times we can tell our “God Story.” And frankly, one of the most important things that we need to realize about our personal testimony, is that we are the one who can tell it best, and with the most sincerity – because it’s OUR story! Now obviously Luke wrote Paul’s testimony down in Acts 22, which is why we’re able to read it today. But the point is, Paul is the one who stood on the steps and took the initiative to share his PERSONAL testimony. You and I should do the same: it is OUR story to tell! [↑](#footnote-ref-45)